

## First State Super recognised as global responsible investment leader

First State Super has been recognised as one of the leading global responsible investors at the PRI in Person conference in Paris today (Tuesday 10 September 2019), winning the inaugural *ESG Incorporation Initiative of the Year Award*.

First State Super was the only Australian superannuation fund to be short-listed for the Award and, was recognised for its unique ESG incorporation strategy known as SIMON (The Systematic Investing Multi-factor Opportunities Strategy).

Fund CEO Deanne Stewart said the SIMON Strategy was developed following internal research which examined the links between key ESG factors and long-term corporate performance.

‘As one of Australia’s largest superannuation funds, we are looking for investments that will continue to deliver strong, sustainable returns for our members in the long-term,’ Ms Stewart said. ‘There are a number of factors which go to determine this long-term potential. Through our SIMON Strategy we have developed our own long-term value creation (LVC) score which we use when considering the viability and ongoing potential for investment for all ASX200 stocks.

‘Too often investors discount the return dividend of strong governance and leadership, attaching greater weight to near-term earnings, or even encouraging management to frontload earnings or cut strategic research and development at the expense of longer-term profits.

‘As a result, the market tends to under-price the ability of companies with a strong or improving LVC to deliver higher and more sustainable returns over the medium to longer-term.

‘Through our SIMON Strategy we are better able to consider the long-term potential of an investment which should then require less portfolio turnover.’

Aside from winning the inaugural *ESG Incorporation Initiative of the Year Award*, First State Super was also named as part of the PRI’s *2019 Leaders’ Group*, which recognises initiatives which showcase leadership and raise standards of responsible investment across the globe.

This year’s Leaders Group focused on asset owners’ selection, appointment and monitoring of external managers in listed equity and private equity.

‘ESG issues such a diversity, workplace culture, governance and the impact of climate change can pose very real long-term risks to our investment returns, and our members retirement savings,’ Ms Stewart said, ‘so it is critical that the fund managers we work with not only identify these risks but, put in place mechanisms to mitigate them.

‘To be recognised in the company of 46 other global leaders in this space, is worthy acknowledgement of the work we have done and will continue to do, to provide our members with the best possible retirement outcomes and be a force for good in our community.’

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### Media enquiries and interview opportunities:

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### Note to Editors:

**First State Super** is one of Australia’s largest industry funds providing superannuation, advice and retirement solutions to those who teach, nurse, care, respond and help others in our communities.

We aim to deliver strong long-term returns and keep our fees low, so members can retire with more. We have a diverse range of investment options and we provide members with access to advice about their super and the investment options available to them.



The way we invest benefits members as well as the communities in which they live work and retire. With nearly \$100bn in assets we often invest directly in assets that create jobs and benefit communities.

We believe in the value of advice and the difference it can make to our members retirement outcomes and are proud to offer members access to our over 220 qualified financial planners across a broad regional network. We also host over 300 free seminars across Australia each year - some in the workplace and others in community-based locations.

We have achieved the highest platinum performance rating from SuperRatings for the past decade. ChantWest, another independent rating agency has awarded us their highest 5-star rating.

We're dedicated to helping our members to 'Feel future ready'.

first & foremost for you